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KEYNOTES

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Vol. IV. No. 12. DECEMBER, 1928. PRICE SIXPENCE.

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"STAY OUT OF THE SOUTH"
Banjo, Mandoline, Guitar and Ukulele

"WHAT DO WE CARE?"
Plectrum Banjo Solo

"THE OLD RUSTIC BRIDGE BY THE MILL"

"ADESTE FIDELES"
Tremolo Banjo Solos

"There's a Blue Ridge in My Heart, Virginia"
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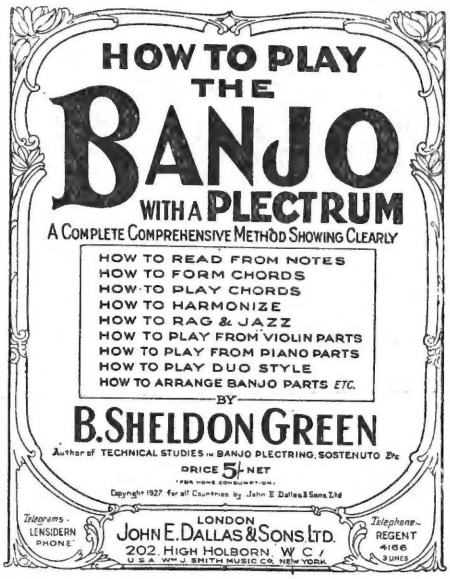
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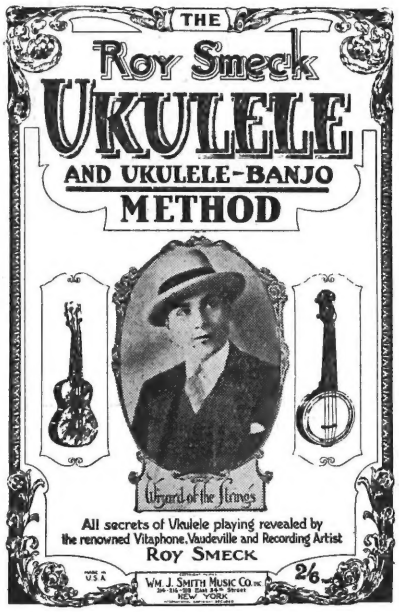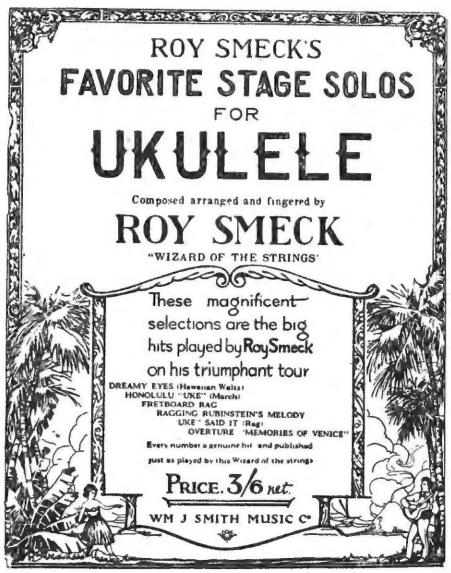

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Christmas Greetings to Our Readers

JOHN ALVEY TURNER'S MUSICAL MONTHLY

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LEGER LINES.

George E. Morris will broadcast from London (2LO) on December 22nd, 7.45-8 o'clock.

Mr. A. Catto, 45, View Terrace, Aberdeen, is anxious to form a banjo club. Will anyone interested write to the above address.

Messrs. Cammeyer and Sheaff will be broadcasting on December 24th, at 9.35 from 2LO. They will give a 12 minute recital.

Eugener Earle has recorded "A Banjo Vamp" and "A Desert Breeze" on the Piccadilly Records, which will be obtainable from John Alvey Turner about Mid-December.

Mr. J. P. Cunningham wishes to state that he has received a notice from Jan Wien *re* the concert report in last month's KEYNOTES, which states that it was his first appearance in London. This is not correct, for Jan Wien states he has played in London before.

GUITAR RECITAL.

Matilde Cuervas and Emilio Pujol will give a recital at the Wigmore Hall on Monday evening, December 3rd, 1928, at 8.30.

Eugene Earle will broadcast from London (2LO) on December 14th.

INTEREST in the fretted instruments, both individual and ensemble, is stimulated and sustained to a large extent by the splendid efforts of Prof. Chas. Daniels, musical director of the Silverstring Studios, located in Johannesburg, Transvaal, South Africa. The Silverstring Mando Orchestra (instrumentation including first and second mandolines, tenor mandolas, mando-'cello, mando-bass and piano) is often before the public in charity concerts, etc. The Silverstring Hawaiian Orchestra has also made several public appearances. These orchestras are composed of pupils of the Silverstring Studios and have been featured in broadcasting programmes and at the local theatres. I understand further that plans are being formulated by this enterprising fretted instrument enthusiast for the formation of a banjo orchestra, composed entirely of vellum instruments, and should the plans materialise this new ensemble will make its dèbut early in the new year. The banjo is most popular now and numerous pupils of these Studios are playing engagements with the local dance bands. The Postal Courses for the fretted instruments provided by the Silverstring Studios help to keep interest sustained in the outlying districts as well.

AT a concert held at West Dulwich Lecture Hall on the 29th October, the "Ridler Banjo Quintette," the members being Misses A. and L. Ridler, Hitchen Langmead and Master George Elliott, contributed "A Pierrot's Serenade" (*Grimshaw*), and in response to loud applause gave as an encore number, "A Banjo Vamp" (*Grimshaw*).

Correct Positions for Right Hand and Left Hand Fingering.

By B. W. DYKES.

THERE have been so many discussions in musical journals in the past on what different authorities consider to be the correct position of the right hand, so I'm sure "another little drink won't do us any harm."

I will first of all deal with the manner of holding an instrument. I would like readers to understand, before I go any further, that I am expressing MY opinion, and do not say that this is necessarily correct, although I have been a successful teacher and player for over twenty years or more.

I have seen some of our foremost players of the banjo holding their instruments in what I consider to be the most ridiculous positions, and a few months ago, at a Wigmore Hall concert, I saw an artist holding his banjo absolutely between his legs, with the arm coming up over his shoulder, almost vertical. This, of course, would be an impossible position for me to play in, but as it suits this particular player and he evidently gets the best results from holding his instrument in that position, I see no reason why I, or anybody else, should say he is wrong.

We say that there is a correct position for holding an instrument, just because it has been always held in that way, but if a particular person finds that they are more comfortable in altering the position a little, and can obtain better results, there is no reason, in my opinion, why good execution should suffer through a bad position. Therefore, I think, that as long as execution is as near perfection as possible, other matters are of secondary consideration.

Personally, I like hold to hold my banjo well in the centre of my right thigh with a fair slope to the body, and the arm sloping upwards, so that the machine head is practically in a straight line with the level of my shoulder.

When playing my mandoline I like the arm almost straight, or rather with a little less slope upwards than the banjo arm, with the body of the instrument sloping against my body at about the same angle as the banjo drum, and I slightly lean across my mandoline, owing to the pear-shaped body being of a more awkward nature to hold still; on the other hand, I can play my mandoline almost equally well standing up and without any cord attached.

I think the foregoing will convey my opinion as to the manner of holding either a banjo or mandoline.

Left Hand Fingering. In playing a banjo I have found that bad tone has often been through more than one cause. Sometimes through fingers being placed badly between the frets; at other times, through fingers being lifted too high; also through using the wrong part of the finger. Now, the banjo, being what I would call a softly strung instrument (by this I mean an instrument with strings which are not tight, and therefore hard to finger) it is better to use the pad of the fingers and not the tips, especially as there is such a lot of barre work in banjo or guitar playing.

In playing the mandoline I would advise just the opposite—to use the actual tip of the finger, so much so that the left hand fingers, when playing, should represent the letter U upside down. *Never* should the fingers be lifted away from the frets more than sufficient to clear them, neither should they be lifted before the player knows why he is lifting them, and where he is going to place them next, as this is the cause of disjointed playing. A player plays a cord or a note, and immediately lifts his fingers, for some reason unknown to me, before he knows what his next note is going to be, or where he has next to place his finger. Therefore, it will be seen by this that the eyes should be continually following the music a little ahead, to enable this small calculation to be made in one's mind before any action is performed by the fingers.

Another point is the position of the thumb. The most common fault to my mind is, that players will have the thumb sticking like a piece of wood upright at the side of the arm, and allow the arm to sink in the crutch made by the first finger and thumb. This is a most awkward position in which to hold the arm of an instrument, and also tends to considerably reduce the agility of the left hand. The neck of the banjo must not be grasped, but should rest between the first finger and the top of the thumb. When taking a long stretch, the thumb will then be thrown back under the arm and the wrist bent outwards.

Special care should be exercised to see that each finger touches only the string on which it is intended to touch. Very often bad tone, or what I call a cracked chord, is played through a finger accidentally touching the next string and spoiling the note which should be played on that string by another finger; this will cause a burr.

If these small points which I have drawn attention to are carefully considered, I think a great many readers of KEYNOTES will say to themselves "that's just what I do," and will find they can considerably improve their playing.

We will now deal with the right hand. The right hand is the hand over which so many different opinions have been expressed, viz., as to whether we should play with the arched wrist or the flat wrist. I know excellent players who feature both styles.

Personally, when playing the banjo, I always hold my wrist rather high. Rather do I let it drop over the strings with my fingers hanging quite flexibly, and my thumb well outstretched in a line with the strings, and not bent at the joint. The thumb should hit the strings with a downward and slightly forward motion. The first and second fingers must not pull the strings, but must give them, what I would best describe as little kicks. By this I mean that the fingers would kick inwards towards the palm of the hand.

I think the best style of playing really comes from the arched wrist, because this hangs naturally at a droop and is not held at any tension, but when the wrist is held low and used in a flat manner, this considerably tightens the leaders or tendons, and therefore gives less flexibility to the fingers, but if a player plays well with a flat wrist, I would certainly raise no objection to him continuing to do so, but there is one point I really must express my opinion about, and that is, as to whether the little finger should rest upon the vellum. I do not consider it is necessary; the vellum vibrating and throwing off tone, must of necessity have those vibrations deadened to a certain extent, through something resting upon it, and that is my firm reason for never touching the vellum.

I have often been asked by pupils, when playing a quick run, should they use the second and first fingers alternately, when doing this on the first string of the

(*Continued on page* 179.)

A Solo given for each new subscriber you get for "Keynotes."

Steel Guitar and Uke Dept.—By A. de Vekey.

A SUGGESTION has been made by Mr. F. Vittle, that it would be a good idea to include an occasional steel guitar solo in the same key as the small orchestra arrangement.

He contends that, as every little village nowadays has its dance band—many using the S.O. parts—that arrangements for the steel guitar would be very acceptable.

He also suggests that, if to suit the arrangement and the instrument to better advantage, it would be found best to utilize a "special tuning," by all means resort to it, for the steel guitar would not be used for more than one or two pieces, for which the same tuning would apply, and would present no difficulty.

Thank you for your note and interest in this department, Mr. Vittle, I will certainly see what can be done in future issues.

Of course, there will always be a certain number who will use the ordinary piano part, but feel sure that so far as possible, the wishes of both sides will be taken care of.

The arrangement of "Virginia" for steel guitar and ukulele solo, is in the same key as the piano copy. In the ukulele arrangement will be found occasional bars in "semi-breve" chords. These may, of course, be "filled up" in a variety of ways, familiar to fretted instrument players of to-day.

Ukeists possessing long-scale instruments are "there" as regards depth and richness of 4th string, but those using short scale ukuleles, can improve their instrument in this respect by using a string that will tune down to the written note.

These are now sold, but owing to the short scale, they will never equal or even approach the richness of a similar string on the long-scale instrument. It will, however, be more effective than having the 4th string tuned "up."

Quite a number of questions are on hand to be answered, but these must wait until future issues.

Here are a few of them:—

Question.

1. "Except from a spectacular view-point, is there any really practical advantage in having guitars with a lot of extra bass strings ?

"They are cumbersome, heavy and expensive. Not that I mind these features, if the extra basses are a worthwhile affair—but *are they?*"

2. "Is it necessary to have instruments of the fretted family with steel rods running through the neck to overcome warping, and isn't it detrimental to tone? Was this not tried some 20 years ago in this country?"

3. "My 1st of 'A' string (tenor banjo), when up to pitch seems stretched to its 'limit' and frequently breaks. Can you suggest anything?"

4. "Which do you recommend, a guitar with a 'glued' or moveable bridge, and do not all the really great guitar players use a fairly lightly-built, glued bridge model?"

5. "Are *'f'* holes on the guitar any advantage over the circular space generally used?

"They were, I believe, first tried in this country on the 'Arthur Froane' Model, but one seldom sees them nowadays."

6. "Where do they publish all this fine guitar music we hear so much about lately.

7. "Are there any A notation banjo solos published in this country."

8. I have a —— Model mandoline and guitar. They both seem very stiff to play, and hard to get the tone out of, although they both cost a good round sum."

"I have just purchased a —— mandoline, which is perfectly delightful to play, and cost much less. Can you suggest anything that could be done about the first two, to make them easier?"

Answers.

The above are a few of the questions awaiting replies, which will be given in detail in an early issue.

Correct Positions for Right and Left Hand Fingering

Continued from page 178.

banjo. There are times when I use the second and first finger, but chiefly, I think, with a little practice, the thumb and first finger will be found more useful for general quick playing. Care must be exercised in keeping the thumb in check, as the thumb has considerably more power than the first finger and, therefore, we would not want an alternate heavy stroke against a light stroke of the first finger.

In mandoline playing I would give no option whatever about the flat or arched wrist, as I am firmly convinced, after having been a mandolinist for thirty years, that the only correct way of playing a mandoline is with the arched wrist, to ensure a sweet tremolo and agility with plectrum work; the plectrum to be held loosely between the joint of the first finger and the thumb, and the wrist swinging like a pendulum without the slightest trace of tension. The plectrum must not be put too far under the strings, as this causes a harsh, sluggish stroke.

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THE TRIPLET.

By Bernard Sheaff.

ANOTHER reader writes to say that his difficulty is to effectively execute the "turn," which is generally introduced into banjo music as a triplet. The example in the first bar of Cammeyer's "Andante and Waltz" (waltz movement) and the one in the second bar of "Merrie Company" by the same composer, are mentioned. Such a use of the triplet is found in a great number of compositions for the banjo, but this little embellishment fails to ornament the piece if it is carelessly played, and becomes a scramble instead of a regular and even succession of notes.

My correspondent asks if the "snap" should be used, and if any of the notes should be hammered with the left hand finger, but before discussing the several ways of executing the triplet-turn, something might be said about the triplet generally. We all know that the figure 3 placed over the group of notes means that they should not occupy more time to play that two notes of the same value, but the digestion of this simple fact does not always prevent the wrong accent and rhythm becoming a habit with some players. When playing a series of triplets in immediate succession, the notes should all evenly follow each other in regard to time. But the rhythm and accent of the "three" time is created by a slight emphasis of the first note of each group of three, and a more pronounced marking of this first note when it occurs on an accented beat in the bar.

The query to hand, however, really refers to the single triplet, the three notes of which are generally on the 1st string, followed by a note on the 2nd string, so let us take, for example, the simple turn in "Andante and Waltz": D-E-D, followed by C sharp on the 2nd string.

The faulty rendering of this generally arises from the idea that the three notes should be played as an isolated phrase. This causes a metaphoric "breath" or pause before C sharp is struck, in this way: D-E-D-C sharp. This is wrong, because the phrase must be one of four notes: D-E-D-C sharp, in perfectly even time, the playing of the three notes being carefully spaced out to exactly occupy their beat in the bar, when the C sharp will fall exactly on the next beat.

Three distinct ways of fingering this passage are available, and the use of any particular one depends, naturally, on the taste of the performer or the speed of the solo. One way is to strike all four notes with the right hand, the fingering then being ·· · ·· +, while another is to strike the first D, hammer E, and snap the 2nd D, using the thumb, as before, for C sharp. I personally prefer to strike the D and E (·· ·) and snap the 2nd D, with the thumb on the fourth note, for this method can be used at any speed, and combines a satisfactory strength of tone with a smooth effect.

A point about the left hand fingering worth mentioning, too, is that it is better to use a finger each for the 1st and 2nd string notes, rather than jump the same finger over to the 2nd string, which often causes an indistinct C sharp. This would mean the 2nd finger for E and the 1st for C sharp.

PLECTRUM BANJO MUSIC IN THIS ISSUE.

By Ernest T. Taylor.

THE arrangement of "What do we care?" will be found quite easy to play, providing the signs for fingering are carefully followed. This solo should be quite within the capabilities of the average player. It is a bright number, and well worth inclusion in a banjoist's repertoire.

"The Old Rustic Bridge by the Mill" is an old ballad which does not lose its popularity with the passing of the years. It is particularly effective when played on the banjo as a chord tremolo solo, in which style it has been arranged for inclusion in KEYNOTES.

Care must be taken to play with a very smooth tone, and any tendency to rattle the strings must be strictly avoided. Above all, do not play too loudly.

Those players who wish to have a pianoforte accompaniment to go with this solo should purchase a copy of the song from Messrs. John Alvey Turner, at the low price of 3d. (postage extra).

The arrangement of "Adeste Fideles" is included for the benefit of those who wish to play a Christmas hymn on their instruments. It may be played in plectrum tremolo, or finger tremolo style. A pleasing effect is obtained if the strings are vibrated by means of a green felt pick, as used by some ukulele players. If the ordinary plectrum is used, play *very* quietly.

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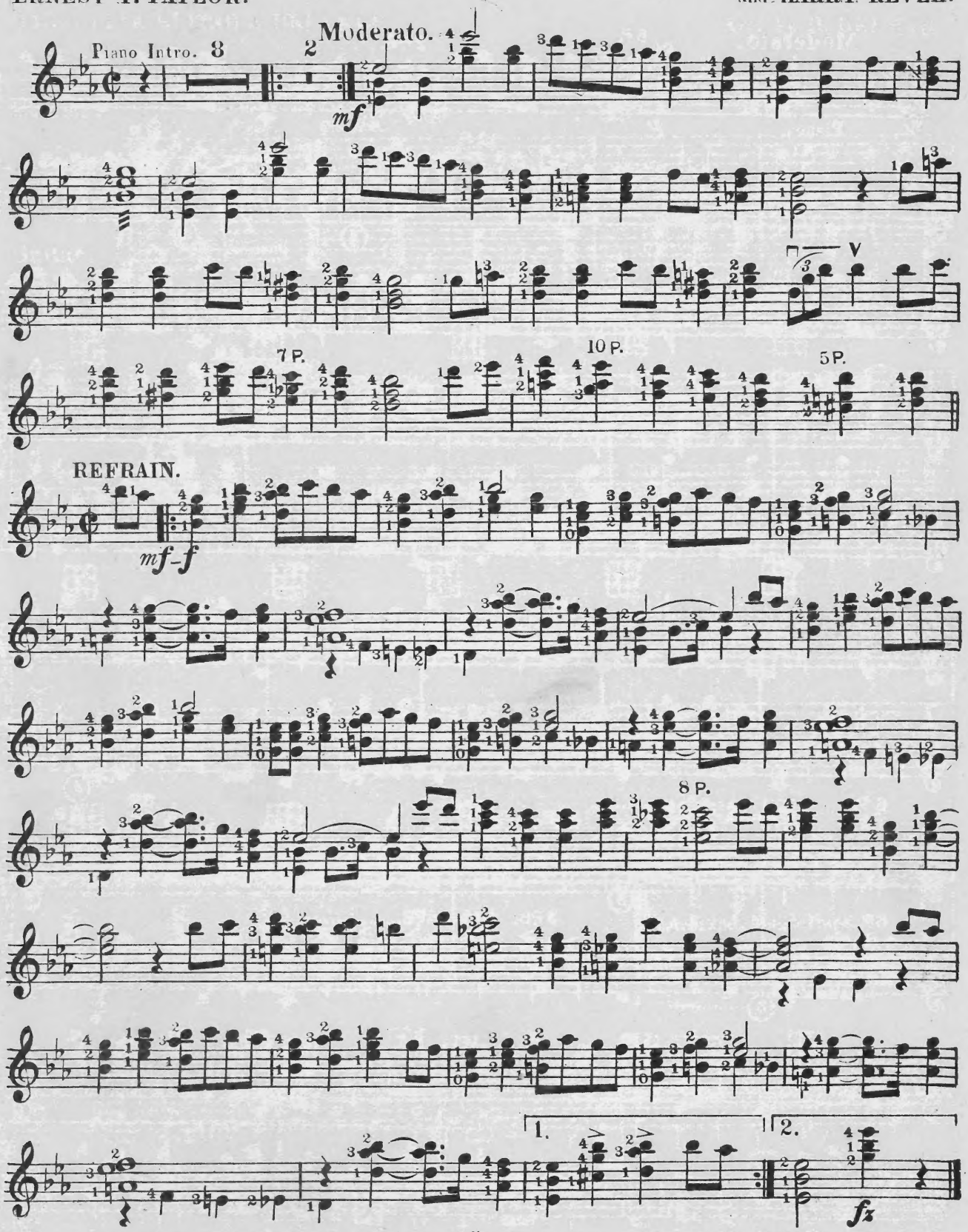
and HARRY REVEL.



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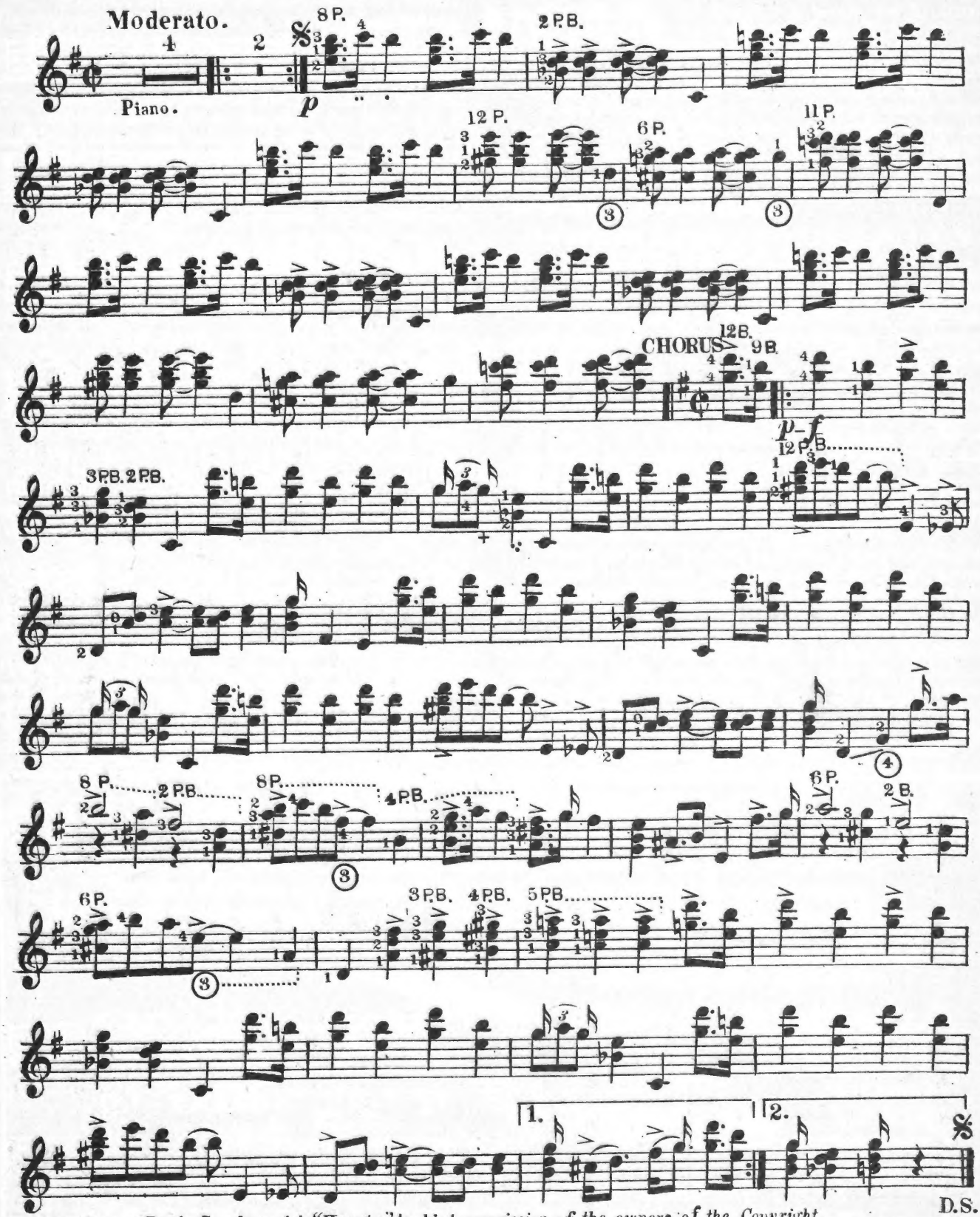
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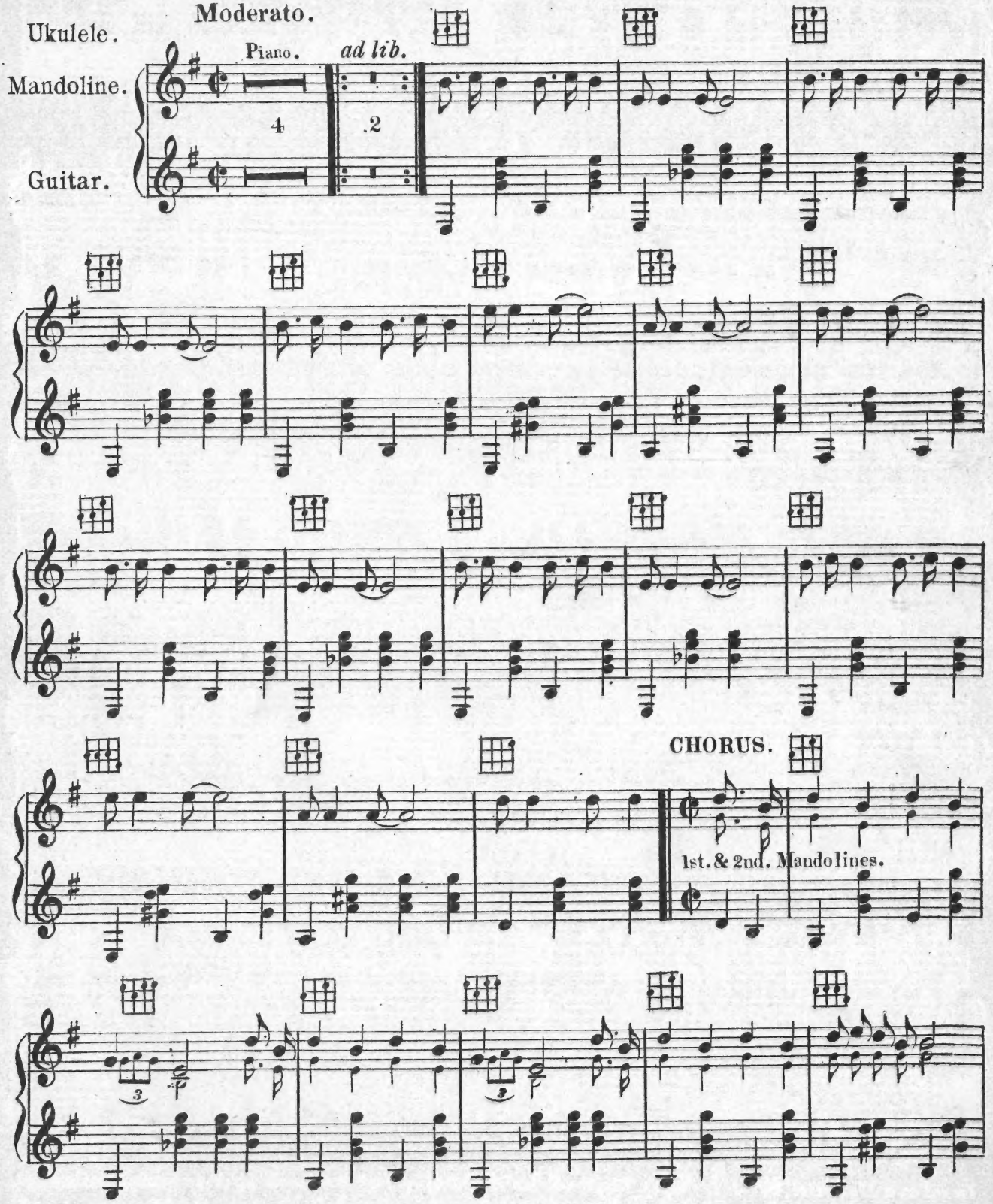
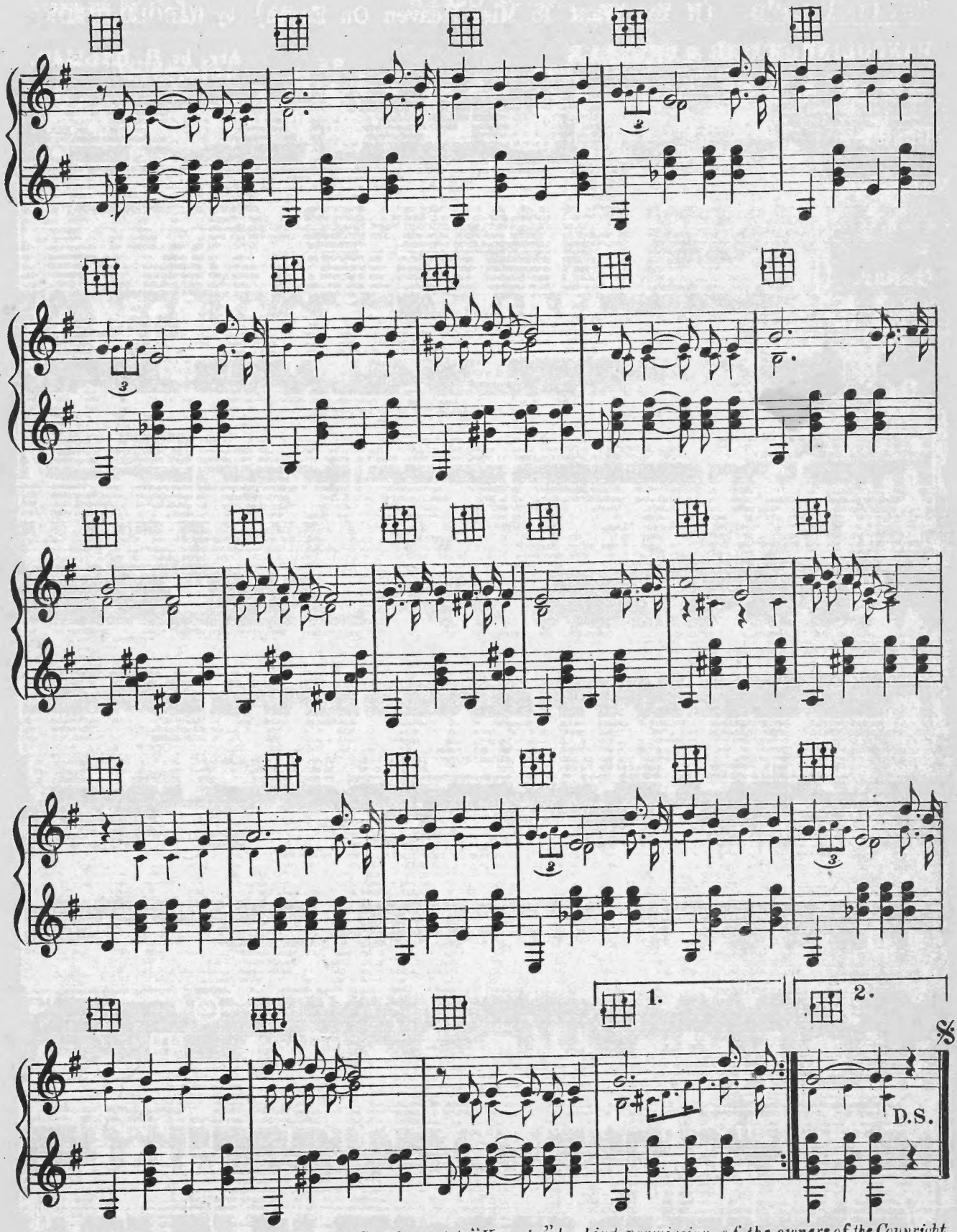
Stay out of the South.

Tune Uke A.D.F♯B. (If You Want To Miss Heaven On Earth) by HAROLD DIXON.

MANDOLINE, GUITAR & UKULELE Arr. by H. DELMAR.

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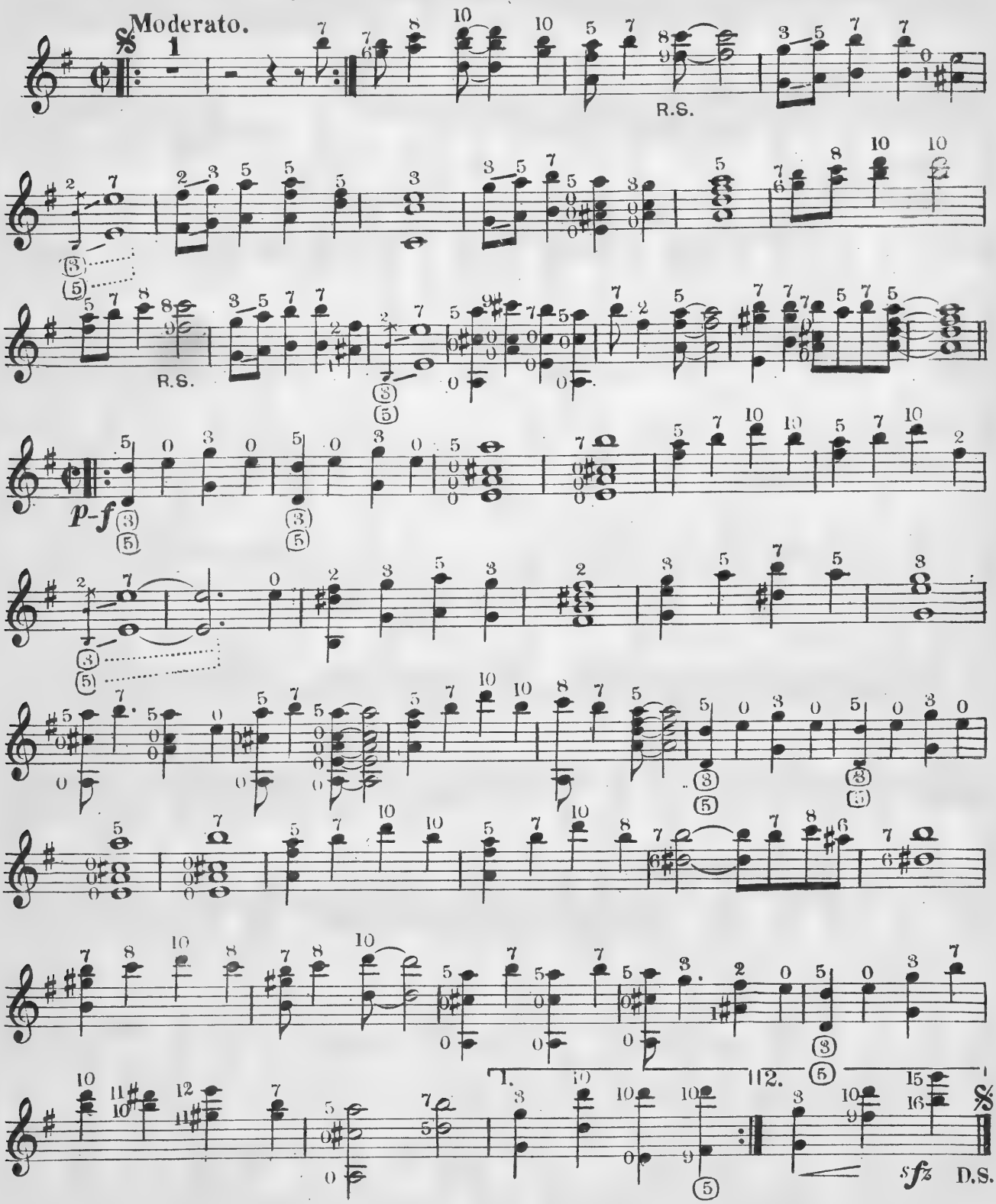
Dec./28.

(THERE'S A BLUE RIDGE IN MY HEART)

Virginia.

By ALFRED BRYAN
FRED. PHILLIPS
& IRA. SHUSTER.

Arr. for STEEL GUITAR by A. de VÉKEY.



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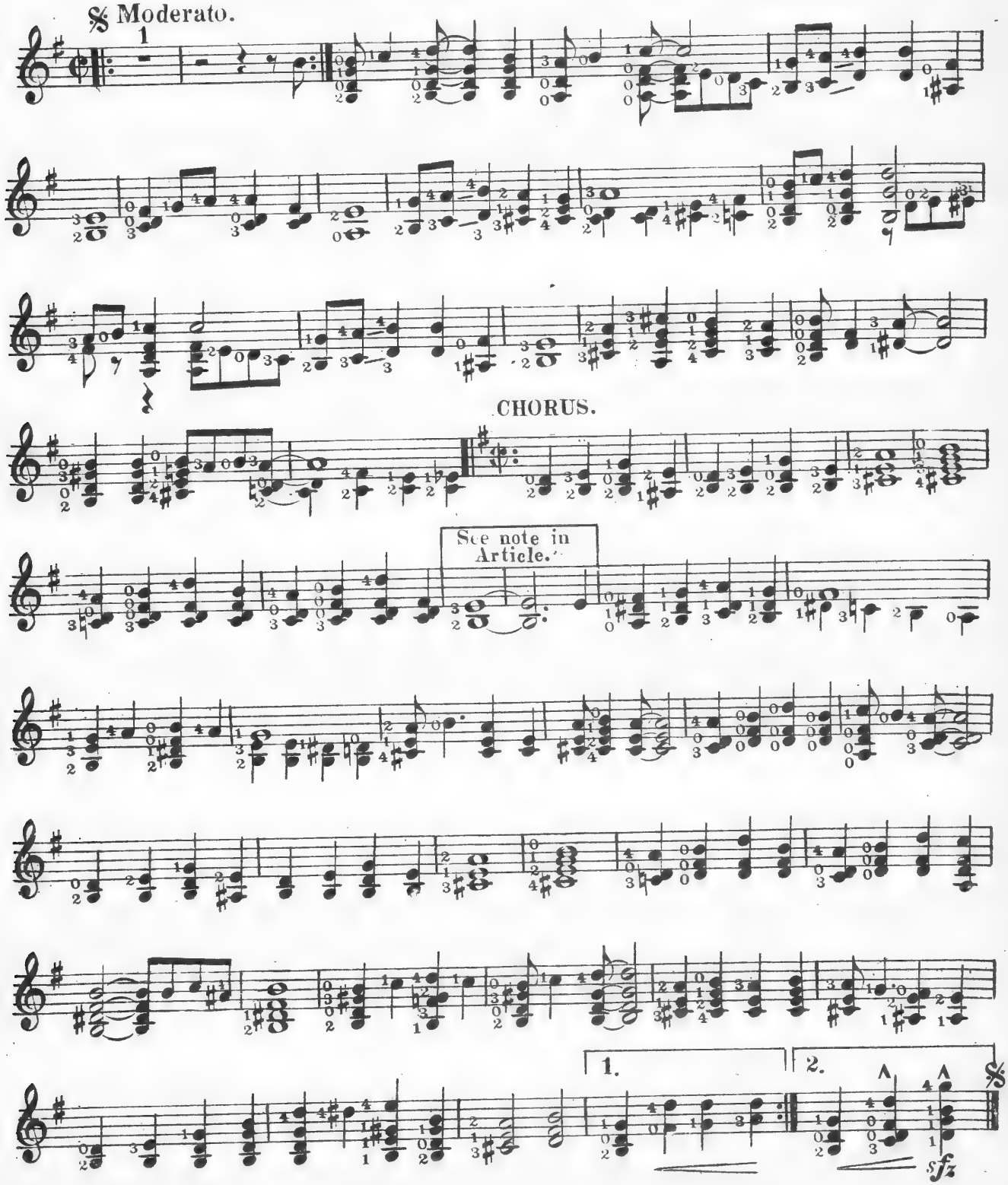
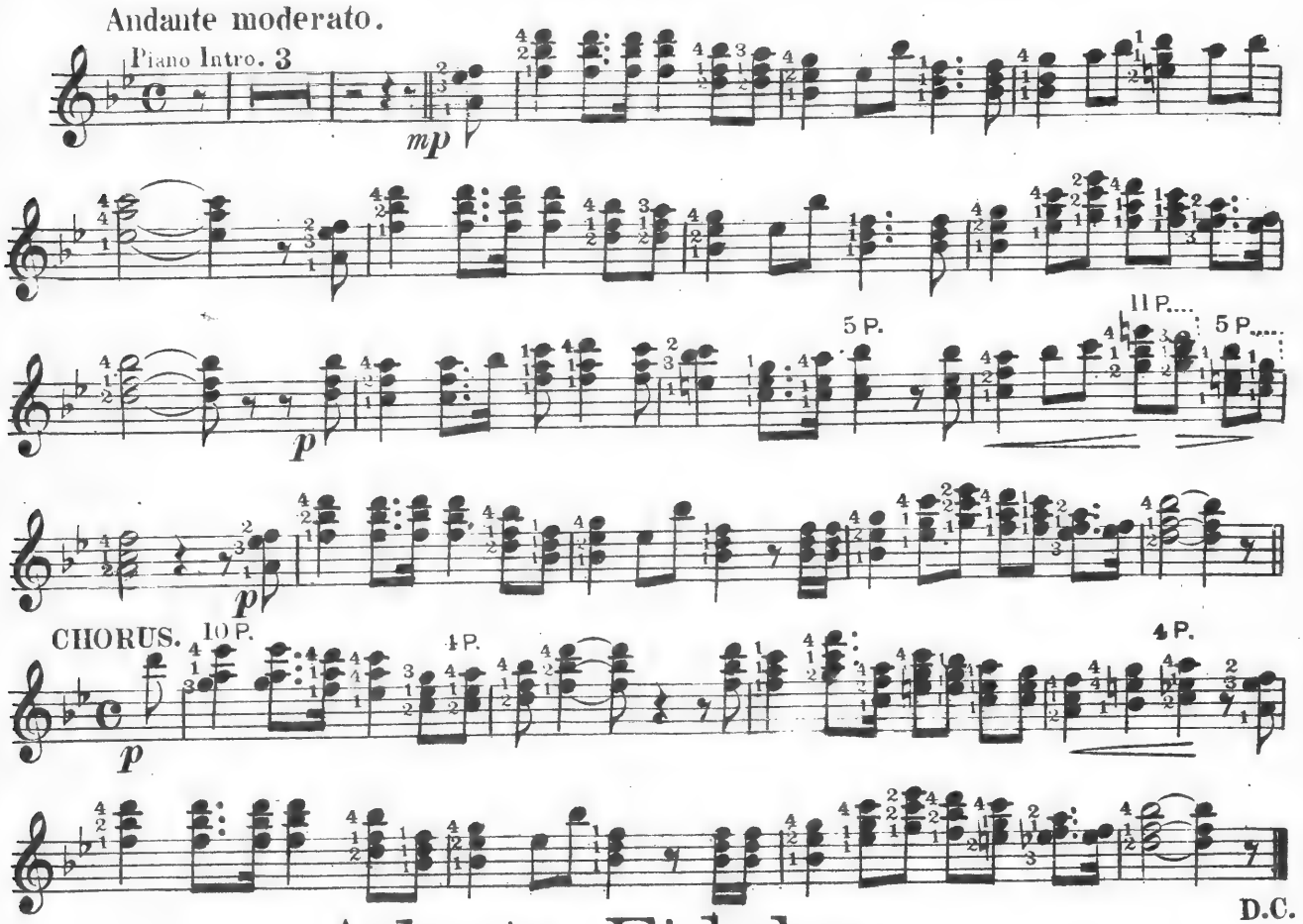
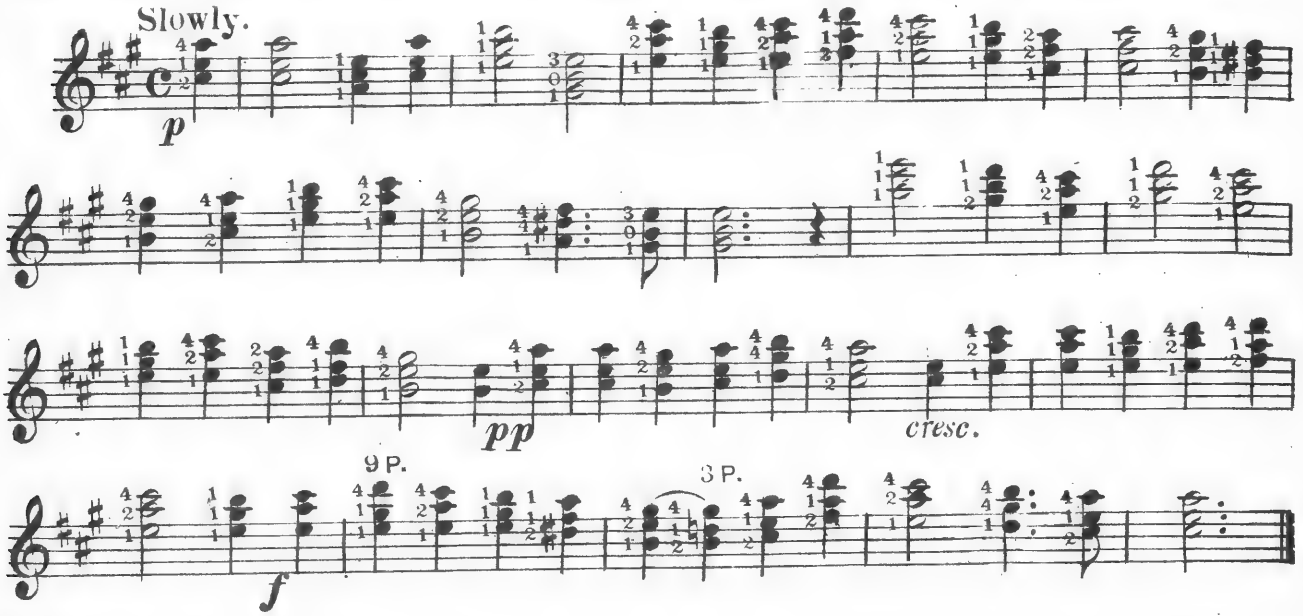
& IRA. SHUSTER.

Arr. for UKULELE SOLO by A. de VÉKEY.

The Old Rustic Bridge by the Mill.

PLECTRUM TREMOLO BANJO SOLO.

Arr. by ERNEST T. TAYLOR. **by J. P. SKELLY.**

Adeste Fideles.

Arranged as a PLECTRUM TREMOLO BANJO SOLO, by ERNEST T. TAYLOR.



Club Notes.

NORTH LONDON B.M.G. CLUB.

TWENTY-FIVE actual and perspective members were present at the second meeting of the North London B.M.G. Club, on Tuesday, 23rd October, at Stirling House, Wood Green. After "Niggertown" had been played, with great enjoyment, as a community item, the rules suggested by the committee were put, and all were adopted.

Many banjo and mandoline solos and a mandoline quartet were rendered, and a very pleasant evening was spent.

"Kilties" was chosen as the next community item. Sterling House, 4, Stewart Crescent, Wood Green, will be the venue of the December meeting on the 18th of the month. In the new year the club will meet regularly on the fourth Monday of each month at the Adult School Hall, 341, High Road, Wood Green. Anyone wishing to join will be made very welcome.

NEATH B.M.G. CLUB.

THE above club, in entering upon its second year, have a few vacancies for membership, and a cordial invitation is extended to all lovers of the kindred instruments.

The next meeting will be held at the St. John Ambulance Hut, Slaughterhouse Lane, Neath, Fri., Nov. 23rd, at 7.30 p.m.

For particulars apply to: Hon. Secretary, Mr. A. E. Pope, 107, Ruskin Street, Briton Ferry, Glam.; or to Mr. H. B. Gardiner, Chairman, 5, Bryn Road, Neath.

THE LONDON B.M.G. CLUB.

SIXTY-FOUR members and friends, including two Vice-Presidents, Mr. A. D. Cammeyer and Mr. B. Sheaff, attended the November meeting on the evening of November 12th. The meeting opened with the members playing the 1928 Presidential March, "Clubmates" (*Troise*), after which the following compulsory items were played:—

Mr. L. Davies, "Stars are Shining" (*Grimshaw*); Mr. B. Harrison, "Kilties" (*Grimshaw*); Mr. F. H. Scott, "Sprig of Shellalagh," (*Morley*); Mr. H. Brazier, "Comical Coons" (*Grimshaw*); Mr. R. E. Heath, "White Coons" (*Pepper*); Mr. B. Bell, "Lollypops" (*Reser*); Mr. Bontle, "Spanish Romance" (*Grimshaw*); Mr. G. Brown, "Dusky Dandy" (*Grimshaw*); Mr. F. C. Walters, "Handy Jack" (*Cammeyer*); Mr. W. Attwell, "Mexican Ride" (*Grimshaw*); Mr. M. D. Berry, "Minuet" (*Morley*).

Mr. A. D. Shuter gave the members' 15 minute recital, playing "Piccaninnies' Christmas" (*Cammeyer*), "Miniature III" (*Cammeyer*), "Smugglers' Cave" (*Shuter*) and "Woodpeckers' Parade" (*Shuter*). The recital was greatly enjoyed; it being particularly interesting to hear the two MS. compositions. Mr. Shuter has a sense of melody which we hope he will continue to develop. Mr. Woollard will give the members' recital in December.

After refreshments the community items were played, and the following were chosen for December:—"It's Monday Night" (*Cammeyer*), "London Club Parade" (*Morley*), "Andante and Waltz" (*Cammeyer*), and "King of Clubs" (*Musselbrook*).

The Chairman reported that Mr. Sheaff had been pleased to accept the Presidentship for 1929. He also drew attention to the very successful concert given by the Club to the Y.M.C.A. Headquarters on Saturday, November 3rd, when the following members willingly gave their services:—The Misses Holland, Shuter and Winter; Messrs. Bell, Day, Lee, Morley, Musselbrook and Thurlow. Accompanist, Mr. C. Greenwood.

Members are reminded that the annual dinner takes place at Pagini's Restaurant, Great Portland Street, W., on Saturday evening, December 22nd, when all members are urged to attend and bring any visitors or friends they wish. Particulars may be obtained from the Hon. Sec., applications must be made forthwith, as the Committee wish to make final arrangements.

The next monthly meeting will take place at the Y.M.C.A. Headquarters, Tottenham Court Road, W.C., on Mon., Dec. 10th, at 8 p.m. Anyone desiring to join will be very welcome.

THE LEEDS B.M.G. CLUB.

THE Leeds Banjo Club held their bi-weekly meeting at the Salem Hunslet, Leeds. Pleased to report better attendance and a marked improvement in playing. The President announced that he is open to organise a trip to London for J. A. Turner's concert in February. Names should be sent in as early as possible, so that seating accommodation can be arranged. The President, who is a patron of these concerts, can assure those wishing to go a good evening's enjoyment. Any banjoists in this district wishing to be a member of the party, please send their names to Mr. W. Whittington, Paragon House, Longroyd Terrace, Burton Road, Leeds, when particulars will be forwarded to them.

THE SOUTH LONDON B.M.G. CLUB.

THE 26th meeting of the Club was held as usual at 361, Brixton Road, on Monday, November 5th, at 8 p.m. thirty-six members and friends being present.

Our President, Mr. Olly Oakley, was at this meeting, and spent a very enjoyable evening with us.

Mr. Oakley has written an MS. which he has dedicated to the Club, and will present it to us in the near future.

Owing to the numerous public engagements which the Club is booked for, the major part of our evenings are devoted to orchestral practice.

The following solos were also played:—

Mr. Burrill, "Lancashire Clogs," zither-banjo; Mr. Bloomfield, "La Paloma," tenor banjo; Mr. Betts, "Le Roi," guitar; Miss Dorrie Courtney, "Pompadour," zither-banjo, "Keynotes Rag," zither-banjo; Messrs. Poole and Barker, "La Marguerite Waltz," zither-banjo; Mr. Barker, "Gold Diggers," zither-banjo; Mr. Williams, "To the Front," zither-banjo.

On Saturday, November 3rd, at a concert at The Hughes Memorial Hall, Battersea, the Club rendered several items which were met with great applause by the audience. Miss Dorrie Courtney and Messrs. Dover and Barker also gave solos which were greatly appreciated and encored.

It is interesting to note that, at our dance, which was held at the Clarence Rooms, Brixton, on Saturday, November 17th, in addition to the usual dance band, the B.M.G. Band played several dance numbers, which proved to be a great success, and were encored several times.

THE LEIGH-ON-SEA B.M.G. CLUB.

THE third meeting of the Leigh-on-Sea Beachcombers B.M.G. Club was held November 19th. The following items were played.

Banjo, "Nigger Town" and "Donkey Laugh," Mr. Behar; banjo, "Uncle Johnny," Mr. W. H. Millis; banjo, "Schaeffers Jig," Mr. Sparrow; banjo duets, "The Kilties," Messrs. Pratt and Greenop; banjo duets, "To the Front," Messrs. Waddington and Behar; banjo duets, "Color'd Major," Messrs. Pratt and Millis; two mandolines and guitar, "March des Mandolinestes," Messrs. Henry, Greenop and Millis; piano solo, Mrs. Edwards.

Community numbers, "Musical Ride," "Return of the Regiment," and "Bonnie Scotland."

THE STRAND B.M.G. ORCHESTRA.

THE "Strand" (Derby and District) B.M.G. Orchestra held their usual monthly meeting at the Studio, Messrs. Edgar Horne & Co., on Saturday, November 3rd, when a most interesting and varied programme was rendered, consisting of solos, duets, trios and concerted items, as follows:—

Concerted items, "Zayda" (*Hudson*), "Tune Tonic" (*Grimshaw*); mandoline duet, with ukulele accompaniment, "Moonlight and you," Misses H. M. Betteridge, H. Dawson and Mrs. Dawson); banjo duet, "Banjo Oddity" (*Morley*), Miss B. E. Dyer, Mrs. Dawson; concerted items, "Beat as you go" (*Grimshaw*), "Gold Diggers" (*Morley*); Hawaiian steel guitar solo, with Spanish guitar accompaniment, "Amparito" (*Cramer*), Mrs. Elsie Dawson, Mr. A. Dawson; (*Encore*), Hawaiian steel guitar solo, "Les Deux Amis" (*Shand*), Mrs. Dawson; tenor banjo trio, "Nigger Minstrels" (*Grimshaw*), Mrs. C. Oldfield, Mrs. Dawson, Mr. R. Mason; mandoline duet, with ukulele accompaniment, "Perhaps you'll think of me," Misses N. M. Betteridge, H. Dawson, Mrs. Dawson; concerted item, "Tattoo" (*Grimshaw*); ukulele solo, "Strumming the Strings" (*Grimshaw*), Mrs. Dawson; concerted item, "Mexican Ride" (*Grimshaw*). Accompanist, Mr. Eric Allport.

THE EAST LONDON B.M.G. CLUB.

AT the meeting of the above club held at the Elite Dancing Academy, High Road, Ilford, on Monday, 29th October, a pleasant evening was passed.

The following items were rendered by members:—

Mr. Stewart-Walker, zither banjo solo, "Nigger Minstrels"; Mr. Patrick Dixon, banjo solo, "Darktown Dandies"; Mr. Custerson, plectrum banjo, "Memories of the South"; Messrs. Morgan and Jones, banjo duet, "Chinese Patrol"; Mr. Colville, plectrum banjo, "Crazy Joe"; Mrs. Jeffries, banjo solo, "Radio March"; Mrs. Norman and Mr. Dykes, mandoline duet, "Il Solitario" and "Figara"; Miss Titmuss and Messrs. Hudson and Aitken, banjo and guitar trio "Waltz Sympathie"; Mrs. Jeffries, Mr. Willis and Miss Willis, banjo, banjoline and piano trio, "Spanish Romance"; Mr. Dykes, mandoline solo, "Polish Dance."

Miss Willis and Miss Stewart-Walker very ably accompanied the solos and concerted items.

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Arched or Flat Wrist.

By ERNEST T. TAYLOR.

I HAVE read with interest the article "Why I prefer the flat wrist style," by Mr. B. Sheldon Green in the November issue of KEYNOTES, and as a "champion of the arched wrist style" I have pleasure in making a reply, as Mr. Green sportingly suggests.

I will take the various points he mentions in their original order.

1. *Chord Tremolo.* To play a true chord tremolo it is necessary, in my opinion, to play with an arched wrist, but the hand must obviously be held in a slightly different position to that adopted for the staccato style of playing. The plectrum will have to be held in such a manner that it points straight down towards the vellum, instead of being held at an angle, as is usual when playing in the staccato style. This, I consider, is the correct way to play a full chord tremolo, and to produce an organ-like and *smooth* tone.

2. I find no difficulty in playing a "back glide" with the arched wrist.

3. I use the arched wrist for the duo style (and every style of plectrum playing) and have no difficulty in getting the required effect. I have heard a number of my own pupils play Mr. Green's duo arrangements, including "Yankee Doodle," and I always insist on their using the arched wrist.

4. I do not agree that an arched wrist player's down-stroke is heavier than his up-stroke. Any such player who is correctly taught, and who takes sufficient care, is able to produce a similar tone from either down- or up-stroke. I am particularly keen on an even tremolo being produced by my pupils, and would not allow anything uneven or "bumpy," as Mr. Green puts it.

5. It is often quite necessary for teachers to stress the point that "the movement must come only from the wrist, and not from the forearm," otherwise almost all young students would keep the wrist quite stiff. It is obvious, of course, that when the wrist moves, the muscles higher up the arm will move in conjunction, but there must be *no conscious movement* of the forearm.

6. With reference to tone, I would like to deny most strenuously that what Mr. Green refers to as a hooked tone is the inevitable result of an arched wrist up-stroke. It is quite a simple matter to make an up-stroke with the necessary tone, without lifting the string from its slot in the bridge, just in the same way that it is quite easy to pick the string with a finger, and produce a full tone without any jarring effect, providing, of course, the correct method is adopted.

The above are my replies to the six points dealt with by Mr. Green in his article, and I shall be obliged if readers of KEYNOTES will turn again to the November issue and study both articles in conjunction.

In conclusion, I would like to say that I have studied the value of the arched wrist in relation to both tone and technique, and have no hesitation in saying that it is vastly superior to the flat wrist method. I regularly play rapid passages in position with ease, and would mention my own composition "Sugar and Spice" (plectrum banjo arrangement) as an example.

To sum up, my own opinion of the flat wrist method in a few words, I would say that it is a distinct bar to advancement in technique, that it produces a bad quality of tone, and does not afford the same opportunities for tonal variation (a very great necessity if the banjo is to be classed as a really musical instrument) as the arched wrist style.

I hope to be able to give in a later article more detailed reasons as to why I prefer the arched wrist for plectrum playing.

THE MANCHESTER B.M.G. CLUB.

AT the October meeting of the Manchester B.M.G. Club, Mr. Batley, of 54, Devonshire Street, All Saints, Manchester, was appointed secretary in succession to Mr. A. E. Green, who has gone to Australia. The following solos were played:—

Mr. T. Jackson, "Return of the Regiment"; Mr. Tipping, "Mister Jolly Boy"; Mr. Matthieu, "Thumbs Up"; Mr. Mitchell, "Banjo Oddity"; Mr. Stroud, "To the Front"; Mr. Holden, "For the Flag"; Mr. Jeal, "Tattoo"; Mr. Thomason, "The Kilties"; Mr. Spindler, "Bolero"; Miss Whitehead, Miss Topping and Mrs. Black and Mrs. Allen forming a quartet of three mandolines and guitar, played "Santarella" and "Figaro."; Messrs. Stroud and Routledge, duet, "Banjo Vamp"; Messrs. Mitchell and Spindler, duets, "Cracker Jack" and "DixieMedley."

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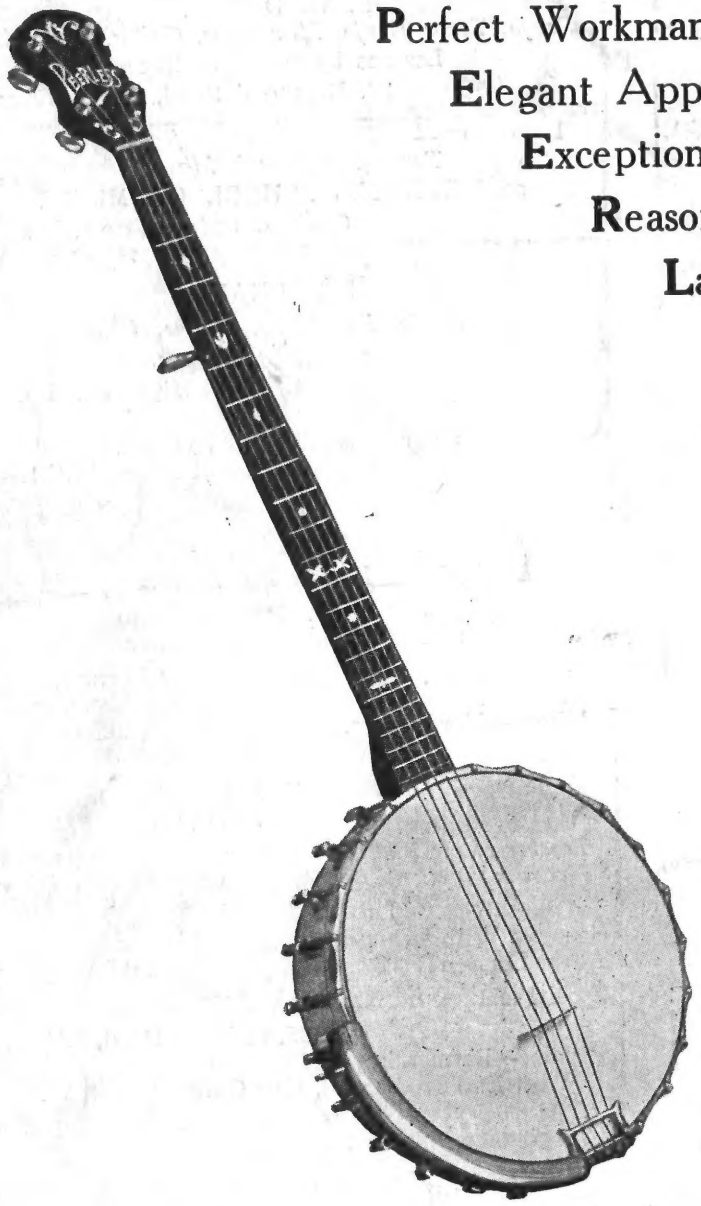

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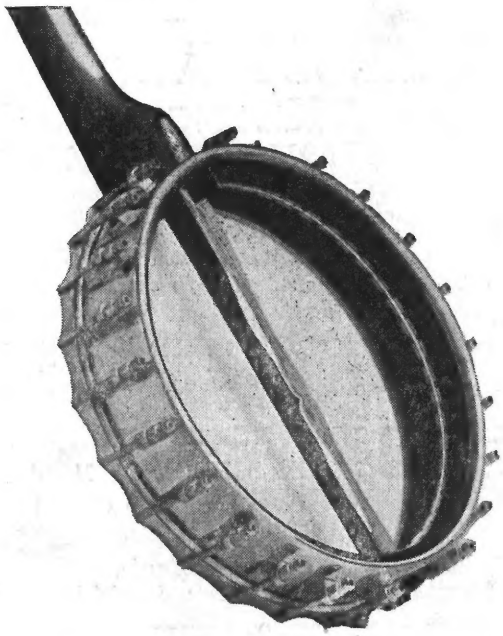

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